SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: It is for the Tribal people in the tribal areas. *(Interruptions)*...

श्री अजय मारू: नहीं, ट्राइबल्स की बात आप हमें न बताएं। अभी हम असम में ट्राइबल्स पर क्या अत्याचार हुआ, उस पर भी चर्चा। करने वाले हैं। ...(व्यवधान).... सभी बिल बहुत महत्वपूर्ण हैं। मैं यह नहीं बोल रहा हूं कि आप उस बिल पर चर्चा न करें, लेकिन नियम होता है। ...(व्यवधान)....

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री संतोष बागड़ोदिया): आप मुझे बोलने देंगे या आप ही आप बोलते रहेंगे।

(The Vice-Chairman) Do you want me to give my ruling or do you want to continue to talk? आपने बोल दिया? अब कुछ और बोलना चाहते हैं या मैं बोलूं? आपकी व्यवस्था की बात बिल्कुल सही है, इसलिए अभी हम उस बिल को नहीं लेंगे। अब हम "द एअरक्राफट (अमेंडमेंट) बिल, 2007" लेंगे। Shri Praful Patel is to move a motion for consideration of the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2007.

THE AIRCRAFT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2007.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Aircraft Act, 1934, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consderation."

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN) IN THE CHAIR]

Sir, the Aircraft Act, 1934 has been sought to be amended and this Amendment has been passed by the Lok Sabha earlier. The entire aviation scenario has undergone a major change and the situation, as it exists today, is far, far different and dynamic than what it was when this Act was passed in 1934. Of course, amendments have been taking place, from time to time. There is also an issue that our legislation should also be compatible with the legislation passed in different countries because the aviation transcends borders, and any legislation will have to be effective and it will have to be in tune with the international practices as adopted by the...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN) Mr. Sen, please sit down.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Charter of the International Civil Aviation Organisation. Therefore, many member-countries have also brought up this issue and it has also been brought up in the various meetings of the International Civil Aviation Organisation, and to bring more parity with the legislation which is available across the entire world, our Aircraft Act, 1934 is sought to be amended to some extent.

Broadly, before the hon. Membes would like to participate, I would like to say that the key aspect behind this Amendment is to bring in more safety and security control by giving more powers to the regulatory framework to be able to, basically, license the people who are engaging in civil aviation activities. Even our airports were not earlier licensed because it was all arising out of the function of the regulatory authority. It was known as the Director-General of Civil Aviation, coordinating the entire activities connected with aviation, including running of airports. Then, it became the Airports Authority. We had the National Airports Authority. Now, we also have a situation where it is not the Ariport Authority alone which is doing the function of running airports; we have private airports and we have joint venture airports; and the scope of these activities is going to keep on increasing more and more in the future. So, we definitely feel that a more comprehensive legislation, which will confer more powers on the regulatory framework, especially, in the licensing of airports; licensing of personnel engaged in air traffic control; certification, inspection and regulation of communication, navigation and air surveillance; and air traffic management facilities.

Also, in a way, we find that the existing power of the DGCA to issue directions needs to be enlarged, especially in the field of aircraft operations, air traffic control and maintenance, operations, as I said, of aerodromes, communication' navigation, surveillance and air traffic management. Also many a time, we find that bird hits are taking place which is being commonly reported and which is a concern to the safety of aircraft and to the people travelling in those aircrafts. There is a prohibition of slaughtering and plying of animals within a radius of 10 kilometres. Right now there is no power or regulatory framework to being all these activities within the framework of the Aircraft Act. These are a couple of things. Then the safety oversight functions of the DGCA also need to be enlarged further. Then there is a need to bring in certain provisions to make violation punishable because right not there are very limited powers and there are very few offences which are actually punishable and the extent of fine or the kind of penalty is very, very limited. As I said, since aviation ranscends borders, aircraft of one country flying to another country and vice versa and we have foreign registered aircraft coming into India, our regulatory framework must also permit that we can exercis certain powers and certain effective controls so that aviation in our country and for the people who fly from our country is also equally safe and conform to certain standards because each State has its own regulatory framework. Therefore, when an aircraft flies into India, though technically it is being monitored by that regulatory framework, but ultimately it is landing on our shores and carrying passengers to and fro India, so we have to have certain kind of overrding power to be able to regulate the activities of these foreign registered aircraft also. These are broad parameters on which we are seeking an amendment to the Aircraft Act, 1934, first and foremost, to make flying more safer to be able to handle the higher and inreasing volume of traffic; and also to be able to have certain overriding powers to, in a way, effectively check licensing and control over the overall aviation activities. This is the motive behind this amendment. Therefore, I request the House to take this Bill into consideration.

The question was proposed.

श्री अजय मारू (झारखंड): माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, आपने मुझे वायुयान (संशोधन) विधेयक, 2007 पर अपने विचार व्यक्त करने का अवसर दिया, सबसे पहले मैं इसके लिए आपका आभारी हू। मैं कतिपय सुझावों एवं अपनी चिताओं के साथ, जिनका मैं जिक्र आगे करुंगा, इस संशोधन विधेयक का समर्थन करता हूं।

महोदय, मंत्री जी ने जो अभी संशोधन विधेयक पेश किया, यह विधेयक गत वष। 7 अगस्त, 2006 को लोक सभा में प्रस्तुत किया गया था, जिसे बाद में संसदीय स्थायी समिति को भेज दिया गया। इस संसदीय स्थायी समिति के अध्यक्ष इसी सदन के सम्मानित सदस्य, श्री सीताराम येचुरी जी ने इस बिल की उपयोगिता एवं आवश्यकता को समझते हंए कई बैठकें कीं और इस विधेयक से जुड़े सभी पक्षों, जिसमें सिविल एविएशन मिनिस्ट्री के अधिकारी, कानून मंत्रालय के अधिकारी, एयरपार्ट अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया के अधिकारी और अन्य स्टेक होल्डर्स से - एयर इंडिया, इंडियन एयरलाइंस, जेट एयरवेज, किंगफिशर एयरलांइस, DGCA तथा एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी इम्प्लाइज एसोसिएशन के प्रतिनिधियों से चचा। की। इस चर्चा के बाद स्थायी समिति ने मार्च में इस रिपोर्ट को पेश किया। यह रिर्पोट जो संशोधन करके पेश की गई, उसमें स्थायी समिति ने जो टिप्पणी की, उसको मैं यहां उद्वत करना चाहता हूं। स्थायी समिति ने कहा कि-

"The Committee feels that no proper thinking has gone into the preparation of the Bill, and that it is a hastily drafted Bill. The Committee strongly feels that it is a peicemeal legislation, and, therefore, it urges upon the Government to carefully consider all the points mentioned and recommends that the Government should come up with a comprehensive legislation incorporating all the suggestions made in the proceddings and paragraphs of the Report and covering all the issues concerning our civil aviation sector."

उन्होंने जो भी recommendations दी हैं, मुझे खुशी है कि हमारे मंत्री जी ने उन बातों पर गौर किया और पुनः इस विधेयक को लोक सभा में 10 सितंबर, 2007 को पेश किया, लेकिन यह महत्वपूर्ण संशोधन विधेयक जब लोक सभा में प्रस्तुत किया गया, तो उस दिन यह बिल लोक सभा में बिना चर्चा के ही पारित हो गया।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारे देश में सिविल ऐवियेशन का इतिहास बहुत पुराना है और आल से 95 वर्ष पूर्व यानी 1912 में पहली उड़ान कराची से दिल्ली के लिए आरंभ हुई थी और उसके 95 वर्ष बाद आज इस क्षेत्र में जितनी प्रगति हुई है, उतनी प्रगति शायद ही किसी क्षेत्र में हुई होगी। आज जब हमारे देश की विकास दर हम 9 प्रतिशत, 10 प्रतिशत बताते हैं, तो सिविल ऐवियेशन के क्षेत्र में यह विकास दर पिछले कुछ वर्षों में 20 से 30 प्रतिशत तक हो गई है। सिविल ऐवियेशन के क्षेत्र में जिसमें कार्गो भी आता है, यात्री भी आते हैं, उनमें यात्रियों की संख्या में प्रति वर्ष करीब 50 प्रतिशत कर दर से वृद्धि हो रही है। अगर हम मूल्यों के आधार पर देखें तो हमारे देश से जितना निर्यात होता है, मूल्यों के आधार पर जितनी राशि का निर्यात होता है, उसका 35 प्रतिशत वायुयान के माध्यम से निर्यात होता है। एक और पहलू यह भी है कि हमारे देश में जितने विदेशी पर्यटक आते हैं, उनमें से 97 प्रतिशत पर्यटक हवाई यातायात से ही आते हैं। इससे इस क्षेत्र के महत्व को समझा जा सकता है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, भारत में पिछले दो दशकों में नागर विमानन के क्षेत्र में उल्लेखनीय प्रगति हुई है और 1994 के बाद जब निजी एयरलाइंस कंपनियों को घरेलू मार्गों पर चलने की छूट दी गई, तो दूसरी तरफ हवाई अड्डों की देखभाल का जिम्मा एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया को दे दिया गया। इन दो दशकों में वायुयानों की संख्या तथा उड़ानों में भी काफी वृद्धि हुई है।

महोदय, हाल के वर्षों में तकनीक, संचार माध्यम, नेवीगेशन, हवाई यातायात प्रबंधन और निगरानी तंत्र में भी उल्लेखनीय परिवर्तन हुए हैं। इस परिस्थिति में सुरक्षा के उपायों तथा तरीकों में भी उसी के अनुसार परिवर्तन करने की आवश्यकता को महसूस किया गया। इस विधेयक में नागर विमानन के महानिदेशक, जिन्हें हम Director General of Civil Aviation भी कहते हैं, उनके अधिकारों को बढ़ाया गया है और नियमों तथा कानूनों का अगर कोई उल्लंघन करता है, तो उनके लिए निर्धारित सज़ा और जुर्माने की रकम में भी भारी वृद्धि की गई है, जो कि एक अच्छा कदम है।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, इस संशोधन विधेयक की एक महत्वपूर्ण बात विदेशों में रजिस्टर्ड हवाई जहाज़ तथा उनमें कार्यरत विदेशी नागरिकों की गतिविधियों को भी नियंत्रित करना है, जो भारतीय जमीन या आकाश में उड़ान भरते हैं। आज हमारे देश में बेशक वायुयानों की संख्या बहुत कम है, एक समय के आंकड़े हैं, उसके हिसाब से 2005 में यह संख्या 160 की थी, जो अब बढ़कर 250 के करीब हो गई है और आज ही के एक प्रश्न के उत्तर में मंत्री जी ने कहा कि 2014-15 तक यह संख्या दोगुनी से भी ज्यादा हो जाएगी और ऐसा अनुमान है कि 2014-15 तक हमारे देश में वायुयानों की संख्या करीबन सात सौ हो जाएगी, हालांकि अगर हम चाइना में वायुयानों की संख्या से तुलना करते हैं तो आज के समय में चाइना में करीबन ग्यारह सौ वायुयान हैं और अगर हम अमेरिका से इसकी तुलना करते हैं, जिसमें व्यावसायिक और निजी वायुयान दोनों आते हैं उसकी संख्या आठ हजार से अधिक है यानी प्रति वर्ष जिस तरह से इस सेक्टर में बढ़ोतरी हो रही है, वायुयानों की संख्या में भी बढ़ोतरी होगी, और उसी के हिसाब से वायुयान के परिचालन में भी बहुत अधिक वृद्धि होगी। आज हमारे देश में करीबन साढ़े चार सौ हवाई पट्टियां हैं, जिसमें से करीबन 125 हवाई अड्डे Airport Authority of India के अधीन है, हालांकि 125 हवाई अड्डों में मात्र 15 हवाई अड्डे ऐसे हैं जो अभी लाभ में हैं, जो Airport Authority of India को प्रोफिट देते हैं और जिनमें अगर हम मुम्बई और दिल्ली के हवाई अड्डों को लेते हैं, Airport Authority of India को जो कुल राजस्व प्राप्त होता है, उसका 33 प्रतिशत लाभ सिर्फ इन दो हवाई अड्डों से प्राप्त होता है, लेकिन कई ऐसे हवाई अड्डे हैं, जो नॉर्थ ईस्ट में हैं या कुछ प्रांतों की राजधानी में हैं, जो economically viable नहीं होते हुए भी सरकार को उन्हें चलाना पड़ता है।

महोदय, ग्यारहवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में Civil Aviation के क्षेत्र में 12.435 करोड़ रुपए के प्लान के साथ सरकार ने नए हवाई अड्डों के लिए जो मौजूदा हवाई अड्डे हैं, उनके विस्तारीकरण के लिए तथा यात्रियों को अधिक सुविधा देने के लिए योजना बनाई है, यह एक बहुत अच्छी बात है। जाहिर है कि इसके बाद विमानों तथा यात्रियों की संख्या में और बढ़ोतरी होगी और अगर यह बढ़ोतरी होगी तो सुरक्षा एक बेहद चुनौतीपूर्ण कार्य हो जाएगा। आज हमारे देश में घरेलू एयरलाइन्स कंपनियों की संख्या में प्रति वर्ष वृद्धि हो रही है, दो साल पहले जहां घरेलू उड़ानों में निजी एयरलाइन्स कंपनियों की संख्या सात थी, आज के दिन यह चौदह हो गई है और मंत्री महोदय जानते होंगे कि प्रतिदिन उनके पास नए-नए आवेदन आ रहे हैं। आज अगर घरेलू यातायात में इनकी संख्या देखी जाए तो वर्ष 2006 में, जनवरी से नवंबर तक, तकरीबन 29 मिलियन यानी दो करोड़ नब्बे लाख घरेलू यात्रियों ने इसमें सफर किया। निजी एयरलाइन्सों में कम भाड़े पर यात्रियों को ले जाने की होड़ मची हुई है, यह स्वागत योग्य है, क्योंकि इससे मध्यम आय वर्ग के लोगों को भी हवाई यातायात का अवसर मिल रहा है।

महोदय, इस अवसर पर हवाई अड्डों पर तेजी से बढ़ रही भीड़-भाड़ और विमान पट्टियों की कमी के कारण विमानों के समय में देरी और इससे यात्रियों को होने वाली परेशानियों की ओर मैं नागर विमानन मंत्री का ध्यान आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूं। पहले से कुछ सुधार हुआ है और आशा है कि जो कार्यक्रम माननीय मंत्री जी ने अपने मंत्रालय में रखा है, उससे और सुधार होगा और आधारभूत सुविधाओं के बिना नए एयरलाइन्स को अनुमति नहीं दी जानी चाहिए, यह एक मेरा सुझाव होगा।

मैं, माननीय मंत्री जी का ध्यान एक और गंभीर विषय की ओर आकृष्ट करना चाहूंगा कि पिछले दिनों कई ऐसी घटनाएं हुई हैं, जिनमें दो विमान या तो जमीन पर या आकाश में निर्धारित दूरी से, बहुत कम दूरी से एक-दूसरे के निकट से गुजर गए, सौभाग्य से अभी तक कोई हादसा नहीं हुआ है, लेकिन इसका अर्थ यह नहीं है कि इस ओर ध्यान नहीं दिया जाना चाहिए। महोदय, वायुयान बढ़ेंगे तो पायलटों की आवश्यकता होगी और अभी हमारे देश में पायलटों की बहुत कमी है और यह कमी हम तुरंत पूरी भी नहीं कर सकते हैं। इस कारण वायुयान कंपनियां विदेशी पायलटों को काम पर रख रही हैं। यह तो ठीक है, मगर जानकारी मिली है कि कई बार पायलटों की उम्र, उनके अनुभव और उनकी गुणवत्ता के मामले में समझौता किया जा रहा है। यह गंभीर बात है, क्योंकि इसका सीधा संबंध यात्रियों की सुरक्षा से है। आज ही के एक Unstarred Question No. 734 में मंत्री जी से एक प्रश्न पूछा गया था, जिसमें उन्होंने कहा है कि कई विदेशी पायलट आज हमारी एयलाइन कंपनियों में काम कर रहे हैं और यह संख्या कोई छोटी-मोटी नहीं है। अगर सभी प्राइवेट एयरलाइन्स, निजी एयरलाइन्स की संख्या को देखें, तो 671 विदेशी पायलट आज भारत में निजी एयलाइन्स और एयर इंडिया की कंपनी में काम कर रहे हैं। इसके अलावा जो इंजीनियर्स और दूसरे विदेशी सहायक हैं, उनकी भी संख्या 131 है। महोदय, मैं विदेशी पायलटों के खिलाफ नहीं हूं, लेकिन इसमें हमारे देश की सुरक्षा.....क्योंकि हमारा देश आज कई प्रकार की आतंकवादी गतिविधियों से गुज़र रहा है, तो जब इन पायलटों को डी.जी.सी.ए. के द्वारा अनुमति दी जाती है, तो उस पर भी विशेष ध्यान देने की आवश्यकता है।

अंत में इस मौके का लाभ उठाते हुए मैं मंत्री जी का ध्यान अपने गृह प्रदेश झारखंड की ओर दिलाना चाहूंगा। महोदय, मेरे राज्य में फिलहाल एक ही राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर हवाई अड्डा है जो कि रांची में है, जो कि प्रदेश की राजधानी होने के कारण महत्वपूर्ण है। अभी हाल में, आपके माध्यम से अनेक नई उड़ान सेवाएं वहां के लिए आरंभ की गई हैं, लेकिन महोदय, मैं मंत्री जी को यह बताना चाहता हूं कि हवाई सेवाएं तो वहां पर बहुत आरंभ हो गई, लेकिन जो आधारभूत सुविधा या क्षमता में बढ़ोतरी होनी चाहिए थी, वह रांची एयरपोर्ट की नहीं हुई है, इसलिए उस ओर भी ध्यान दिया जाना चाहिए और रांची के अलावा जमशेदपुर, धनबाद और पलामू को भी हवाई नक्शे में लाने की कोशिश होनी चाहिए।

एक और बात की ओर मैं मंत्री जी का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूं कि सरकार की जो एयरलाइन कंपनी एयर इंडिया है, हाल के दिनों में, कई बार दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर यात्रियों ने बहुत असुविधा महसूस की और वह भी पायलटों की कमी के कारण। आज के अखबारों में भी आया है कि परसों रात को दुबई जाने वाला एक प्लेन

दिल्ली से 24 घंटे इसलिए देरी से उड़ा क्योंकि वहां पायलट उपलब्ध नहीं थे। कुछ टेक्नीकल प्रॉब्लम के चलते वह फ्लाइट देर से उड़ी और जब टेक्नीकल प्रॉब्लम दूर कर दिया गया, तो पायलट ने उस हवाई जहाज़ को उड़ाने से मना कर दिया। मंत्री महोदय, इन सब कारणों से हमारी जो सरकारी एयरलाइन कंपनी एयर इंडिया है, उसकी छवि पर असर पड़ता है, इसलिए कोशिश यह की जानी चाहिए कि एयर इंडिया की जितनी उड़ानें हैं, उनमें पायलटों की कमी न हो। महोदय, इन्हीं सब सुझावों के साथ मैं प्रस्तुत संशोधन विधेयक का समर्थन करता हूं और उम्मीद करता हूं कि आने वाले वर्षों में सिविल एविएशन के क्षेत्र में हम और आगे बढ़ेंगे। बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA (Rajasthan): Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I rise to support wholeheartedly the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2007. Most of the clauses are, I should say, enabling clauses so that the aircraft or airline system in the country can improve. But the most important clause I consider is amendment to Section 5(a). I am not going into the sections but only the last 3-4 lines I would like to quote: "To any person or persons using any aerodrome or engaged in aircraft operations, air traffic control, maintenance and operation of aerodrome, communication, navigation, surveillance and air traffic, management facilities and safeguarding civil aviation against acts of unlawful interference shall be substituted." It is an important substitution and I will speak on the subject a bit later. But, in the meanwhile, I take this opportunity to complement the hon. Minister. The way the growth has taken place even or ordinary citizen of the country can travel by air today. This is what was required. It was earlier considered not only a luxury but only very rich people could afford it. Even I should say that second level rich people were also finding it difficult. But today I know anybody and everybody can just decide and he or she can afford it because sometimes the airfare for passenger traffic is lesser than the railway fare. This is really excellent. With his vision, with the kind of growth we have in this country in different spheres, he has risen to the occasion and it has gone ahead of development in other areas. It is another credit that goes to him. Sir, as marooji has pointed out, the passenger growth is 50 per cent. This percentage of growth is 40, 50, or 60 but the point is that the growth is phenomenal. I know the importance of development of aviation in the country. In Paris Show, Sir, the maximum number of aircraft was purchased by India in 2006. Am I right? That is where the whole world was wondering what is happening in this country. Before that, the country was not exposed to the entire world. The moment they found that it is this country, which is considered to be a poor country, this is the country where they never thought that India could grow like this, the maximum number of aircraft is being purchased by this country different operators of this country. This is how Indian window has been opened by an act in the Paris Show. Sir, it is all right that we have developed. I also understand you cannot develop everything together. There is need for infrastructure like airports; the need for pilots, the need for ATCs and all these things will follow. This is very well taken. But whatever is available is it being used properly? That has to be seen. Whatever is available is it being used round the clock? Are we having the maximum utility of the infrastructure that is already availablel? We know unless we use it in a proper manner there will be problems. What Marooji has said and what we experience everyday is the delays, air misses. It is frightening. But I can inform, through you, Sir, Marooji and the House because I understand sometimes these air misses are more notional than real. Sometimes what is projected by media is not always true. I understand that the safest system and controls are in our country in the world. The record for accidents is lowest in our country. But still it does not mean that there is no scope for improvement. The hon. Minister is seized of this problem. So, I am sure this fear of misses should not be there because in ordinary life when we pass through we hit somebody or we miss somebody or even on the road when we are moving around somebody misses or somebody gets into an accident. An accident after all is an accident. But the important thing is whether we are taking all the

precautions required or whether we are compromising on the quality of safety requirements. If you are not compromising then whatever risk is there, that risk is to all, each one of us that we have to accept because we cannot go beyond a limit. Risk is always there in every walk of life. Sir, when we mentioned about foreign pilots, one problem I want to tell the hon. Minister, through you, is the language. Sir, a number of foreign pilots do not know Hindi or English. I know about pilots from Russia, Uzbekistan and some other countries. I am not talking about accent only. It is a question of language. They don't even know that language. They just speak a few words and they think they can get away with it. I request the hon. Minister to kindly have a test of their language. Whether they can fly or not, language is important. Flying knowledge is separate but communication is equally important. The ATC says, "land" and he might think he has to go up. What will happen? Just think of it. So, the language of the foreign pilots is very important. I also hear that some foreign pilots who have been rejected...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF P.J. KURIEN): Why can't they be given some language course?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I will inform the House after the discussion.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY (Karnataka): This matter has been discussed in the Standing Committee before the recommendation. We had discussed it in detail.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: I am happy that the Standing Committee has discussed this matter. That means it is an important matter. I am happy that hon. Minister has some ideas, so we will all know about it and we will feel more assured. Sir, licenses of some Indian pilots have been cancelled for different reasons. I understand they have gone outside the country, got the licence and they are again operating here because getting licences outside the country, I am told, is much easier than getting licence in India. If that situation is also there, I request the hon. Minister to kindly look into it that somebody who cannot get a licence here simply gets a licence from outside the country. Please see that he does not become necessarily eligible to fly in our country and create security risk for all of us. Sir, at this stage, I will strongly recommend to the hon. Minister through you, Sir, that we need more airports. We need more airports within the big cities like Delhi. Since there is only one airport, there is congestion not only in the skies near the airports, not only there is congestion on the terminal buildings but there is congestion on the roads. A few days ago, on the day when there was a bit of a problem in Calcutta I had to rush back. I started at 9 o'clock. I took one hour 45 minutes in the morning to reach from the airport to my home. It is just because there is no airport. Everybody has to land there. But the infrastructure to get out of the airport is limited. So, Sir, leaving aside all other problems, we must have more airports. In every corner of Delhi we need airports. Delhi is quite spread over. If New York can have more airports, if London can have more airports, why not Delhi? Why not Bangalore? Why not Hyderabad? Why not Calcutta? Why not Chennai and Yavatmal? I don't mind. Sir, we need more airports. So, I know some people may object to this decision. Since airports are going to be operated by private people, they would like to have monopoly. But it is not a question of their convenience. It is a question of convenience of the country. It is a question of convenience of the nation. It is a question of convenience of the public, the masses and the convenience of growth. Can we grow by restricting? No. So, we have to open up there also. Sir, now you are well developed in these areas. Private people are coming. You have lot of resources. I know small towns are not your problem. In some places, the State Governments have to do it. Either you fund them or you encourage them. You have to find out a policy. The way they are developing here, small towns and cities should also be connected. I would say, particularly, places like the North-East, Rajasthan, border areas, have to be connected. For example, Sir, places like Bikaner and Barmer in Rajasthan are remote areas. But, you will be amazed to know, people from all over

the world want to visit those places. And, Sir, even people from India want to go here. But, they have no access. There are no flights. Still, people go there by rail or by road. Why cannot we develop airports in such places? If we develop airports, I am sure, the private operators will take their aircraft. Then, there are industrial belts. There are religious places like Ajmer and Bhilwara, known as the second Mumbai for textile industry. Sir, 60 per cent suit-length is manufactured in Bhilwara and we have no flights! It is because the airport is small. It is not big enough so that the flights can Land. So, the Central Government has to come forward to develop those areas. The Government need not have to bother about the big cities. Now, the private people are coming forward, since they are beneficial and profitable. But, if you think of the smaller places, the private people will not go. You have decided, 'All right. We will allow the private people.' But, they will not go there. This is where the responsibility of the Government comes in. You have to develop area which are not economically viable in the beginning. We talk of airports in places like Delhi.

Mr. Maroo has mentioned about the delay in flights. I get scared now-a-days. Earlier, if I want to join for dinner, I will board 5 o' clock flight in the evening and by 7 o' clock the flight lands and I will be able to attend the dinner. Now, 5 o' clock flight can come at 9 o' clock or 10 o' clock or 11 p'clock. Time is not the limit. So, I request the hon. minister to know one thing. It is the question of mindset. If private operators can operate the flights much more on time, why could not own national carriers do that? I am fully supporting Air India. Today, Air India includes international and domestic flights. I am in full support of it. But, the point is, if the private operators can handle it, I am sure, AI can also handle it. Why is it not being handled. I want to tell you the mindset. 15 मिनट लेट हुआ है, क्यों इतना हल्ला कर रहे हो? 20 मिनट लेट हुआ है, आधा घंटा लेट हुआ है। Now, in the case of private operators, the passengers know that the counter would be closed at a particular time. Under no circumstances, anybody will be taken in after that. Passengers know the aircraft will not stop if you come late. The security people will not be able to delay the flight if you are not able to cross the security line. The aircraft is not going to wait for you. Therefore, our mindset has to change. I request the hon. Minister to please tell the operators of Ai to change their mind set. There is no question of one minute delay. I think, the thinking in our national carrier is that fifteen minutes delay, probably, he can correct me if I am wrong, is taken as 'on time.' How can it be 'on-line?' Fifteen minutes delay is fifteen minutes delay. On-time means on-time. There is no question of tolerance. There should be zero tolerance. It is only then our national carrier can really compete with the private people. Sir, another very, very important thing, as I was mentioning, is safeguarding the civil aviation against the acts of unlawful interferers, security risk. I don't think we can compromise on security and safety. We have already mentioned that the pilots or the ATCs or the maintenance of the aircraft, all are important. But, it is the sovereign right and the duty of the government to keep all the airports in the country secured and safe. But, unfortunately, it is not true, particularly, in the case of Delhi itself. Sir, for your kind information, the temporary passes for the entry inside the airport are being issued by private people. It may be daily passes; it may be only for one hour; it may be only for ten hours. A terrorist does not need a permanent pass for one month to carry out his act. No officer, no Ministry has this authority to pass on this responsibility to any other authority, which is private. But, unfortunately, this is happening day in and day out. Unless this is checked we will cut a very sorry figure someday when we will know something disastrous has happened. I would also like to warn the private operators who are very eager to take this kind of responsibility. What has happened in the case of Uphar? All of us know that the owners have been held responsible for that incident. They will be jailed. Similarly, no private operator, taking such responsibility, is able to understand that. I want to warn them that if any untoward incident takes places, they will personally be held responsible. Forget about what will happen to all of us, what about innocent citizens of the country who don't even know what is happening.

SHRI V. NARAYANSAMY (Puducherry): Why forget us? The safety of everbody is essential. *(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): He is not saying in that sense. *(Interruptions)* Please proceed. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, my brother enjoys interrupting me. *(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): No problem. If you speak more, his time will be curtailed. So, you don't worry about that. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, I am not worried. I am enjoying him. *(Interruptions)* The point is that the ordinary citizen may not know it. Obviously, he cannot know it. But, at least, the House should know, the Ministry should know, the hon. Minister should know that this is going to be a very great risk, unless something is done about it. And, why it is not being done, I fail to understand that. What is the advantage of the private operator, that too I fail to understand because monetarily he does not get any advantage. You know, Sir, a foreigner is heading the organization. He is at liberty to move around. But an Indian citizen will not have the same right.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Bagrodiaji, there is one more speaker from the Congress Party.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, I will not take very long time. If you want, I will close very soon. I will not take very long time. I will quickly make a reference to the example of Kolkata episode For example, thereis the Kolkata episode. That day, suddenly, a 48-hour *bandh* was announced. Thousand and thousands of people came totheAirport at night. They were sleeping on the floor. Nothing can be done by the Ministry; by the Government, I understand that. Since I also wanted to get out of the town on that day, I telephoned the Indian airlines authorities in Delhi. I don't want to name the officers. Very senior officer told me, "I am helpless. I don't know what will happen next morning." I warned even the local officers by saying, "Look, if the crew members are not brought to the airport in time, the *Bandh* will start at 6.00 a.m. I knew from internal sources that they are going to block first time near the airport." So, please get the crew before 5 o' clock." After a lot of effort, I am glad to say, they accepted it, and they brought them. They brought them, and the result was our flight could leave in time also. What I am trying to say is that I had to make an effort. This should have come automatically. If there is an emergency, then emergency action should have come automatically. I am not going into the details of what happended at the airport because that will be too personal. I am not talking about myself. I am talking of the thousands of passengers who had problem.

Now, sir, another thing, which we are all seeing is that the hon. Defence Minister had mentioned something about frisking of all the three Chiefs; the Air Chief, the Army Chief and the Navy Chief. I do not find and reasons why they should not be exempted. So I am not on that issue. I have no problem; they should be rather exempted. Many others have been exempted and they should also be exempted. Three of them, at least, should be exempted. But, at this stage, I also want to tell my friends in the Services, I have noticed at Jaipur Airport and Delhi Airport that, may be, legally they are not exempted, maybe, they do not go like that, they go in a lawful manner, but a number of officers at the lower level from these services, they just pass through without any frisking. Not only this that they pass through along with them a retinue of officers pass through. They are not going to board the flight. They have no reason to pass through the security, But even retired officers from these Services just pass through. The poor constable or the officer, whoever is frisking there, cannot dare to speak a word about it. Probably, he will be beaten on the spot. That also has to be stopped. Anybody who comes

in that uniform thinks, he has the right to pass through without frisking. I do not think as a Member of Parliament I have that right. I think by frisking me he is saving me also from a disaster. I am happy about it. I am not even asking for that kind of privilege for any member of Parliament. But, this privilege should be only for three of them and not for anybody. Nobody else should be allowed to enter along with them, That has to be thoroughly checked, sir, otherwise, the meaning of this frisking will be completely lost.

Sir, this is a very important point that was published only one or two days before. The report has come about the merged Air India finances. I will just tell you that in 1996-97, Rs. 296 crores the Airlines were minus; in red, that is, at that rupee value. In 1997-98, it was Rs. 181 crores; in 1998-99, it was Rs. 174 crores, and, slowly, it went on improving. It was Rs. 37 crores next year; in 2000-01, it was Rs. 44 crores, and in2001-02, there was a profit of Rs. 15 crores. In 2002-03, there was a huge profit of Rs. 133 crores, in 2003-04, it was Rs. 92 crores, in 2004-05, it was Rs, 96 crores, in 2005-06, it was Rs. 14.94 crores . I can't understand how, suddenly, why there is a big, big loss of Rs. 1,100 crores. I won't like to use the word 'manipulation'. There is no way out; with the expert advice of accountants in the books you can show lesser losses, but the actual loss is Rs. 1,100 crores. Something has to be done about it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN) Please conclude.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA; Sir, I will take only two minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Okay.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, after merging, the Indian Airlines people are very much demoralized. So, I know, whenever there is a change, this kind of a situation arises. So, I will request the hon. Minister to do something. The communication with them has to improve, so that they are not demoralized any more.

Sir, the last point I would like to make is that Centre is yet to take action on delays. There was a meeting in Bombay where the Secretary chaired the meeting. I thought Air India is an autonomous body. I thought CMD is an independent individual. I do not know how the Secretary can chair the meeting of an autonomous body, that is, Air India.

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Why not?

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: If it is allowed under the law, I have no problem, but I think it is not. If it is allowed, then, it is all right, because with him only three or four PSUs are there, but the hon. Minister has got 48 PSUs; so, if Secretary is allowed, it is allowed, it is all right. But that will only create unnecessary interference from the Government, which I am sure the hon. Minister won't like. With these words, I support the Bill and whatever I said, I still compliment the hon.. Minister because even small people like me can travel by air now. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): But you are not small Bagrodiaji, keep that in mind. Now, Shri Matilal Sarkarji.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR (Tripura): Mr. Vice-chairman, Sir, I thank you for having given me this opportunity. First of all, I support the aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2007 which has been placed here by the hon. Minister. At the same time, I would also like to express some of my concerns about the Bill.

Sir, coming to clause 4(a) here, I see it is mentioned, "The Director General of Civil Aviation or any other officer, specially empowered in this behalf by the Central Government, shall perform the safety oversight functions...." Sir, it seems to be unwise to say "any other officer". There should be some specific officer, holding some rank, status and powers. When there is the Director-General of Civil Aviation, why the question of "any other officer" comes. So, here, it is not specific as to who will bear the responsibility.

Now, Sir, I come to clause no. 6. Here it is stated that the functions which befit the Airport Authority of India are now being proposed to be shifted to the Director-General Civil Aviation. At the same time, the airports Authority of India Act, 1994, has been kept intact. It has not been changed. There is definitely a possibility of clashes of powers, overlapping of powers, etc. so, that has to be made clear.

Sir, I now come to clause No. 7. Here the events are categorised as 'incident' and 'accident'. Previously, it was 'accident'. But now the term 'incident' has come beside the world 'accident'. So, what is 'incident' and what is 'accident' have to be clearly mentioned. It should be well defined. The degree of intensity as to what amounts to 'accident' and what amounts to 'incident' has not been differentiated.

Sir, coming to clause No. 10, I wish to say that previously there was no provision as to how to regulate the operation of the foreign-registered aircraft. Now, in clause No. 10, there has been made a provision in this regard. It is a good amendment. I appreciate this amendment.

Sir, the main reason as to why this Bill has been brought is because of the growth in the field of air services. Sir, it is always true that whenever there is growth, there will be some problem. Growth invites problems. While dealing with the growth, the Minister should pay attention to this point. A lot of ambiguities exist regarding the role of Airports Authority of India, its powers and functions. I have mentioned some of these. Sir, it is fact that new private airports, Green field airports, chartered airways have come in and are regularly coming in. Many private and foreign airlines are entering into the Indian sky. So, there is a pressure in the sky. It is being over crowded and, consequently, there is pressure on the ground in the form of traffic congestion, etc. So, there also the pressure is being felt. So, the Government should become more futuristic. I am using the term which has been mentioned in the Standing Committee Report. I will repeat it. It has been said that the Government should be futuristic while framing the rules. Vast developments in technology, communication, navigation, surveillance, and air traffic management are taking place. Now the stage has come where the technology is switching from the ground-based technology to satellite-based technology. There is a jump in the technology. It is occurring now. These developments have given rise to the need of appropriate safeguards to ensure protection of civil aviation against the acts of unlawful interference. Sir, of course, these are mentioned in the objective. I appreciate this, but proper care has not been taken. All the concern are not accommodated in the Bill, As the hon. Member, Shri Maroo, said, the Bill has been hastily drafted. So, a comprehensive Bill is needed to accommodate all the concerns and all the factors. I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to come as soon as possible with a comprehensive Bill to incorporate all these concerns.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Thank you.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Sir, I have not taken much time.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Please try to conclude soon.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Sir, as regards the services, I would like to mention about the North-Eastern region. In the North-Eastern region, as the hon. Minister and everybody is aware, road connectivity is insufficient and it does not connect all the major towns and cities of the North-East. Now, if there is also no proper air connectivity, how will the people of the North-East move from one part to the other. I appreciate the efforts made by the hon. Minister; under his leadership, the Agartala airport has Now become a very important airport and number of flights are being operated by Air India and by other private airlines also from there. There is development, no doubt about it. But what we see is that at the ATR services in the North-East are most irregular. Delay has been a regular feature, but not cancellation of services has also become a regular feature with the ATR services. I would request the hon. Minister to give special attention to the matter.

Sir, regarding the renovation of airports, I have already mentioned in this House that in our State there are old airports at Kamalpur and Kailasahar. Renovation work has not yet been started at Kamalpur and at Kailasahar also renovation work needs to be expedited. I would request the hon. Minister to take note of it.

Sir, I would like to make a point about the staff. At Agartala as also at most of the airports, I have noticed that the ground staff have to work from morning till evening and sometimes even up to night. There is no proper shift system. The matter has to be looked into so that they are not compelled to serve for more than eight hours. Presently, they are compelled to serve beyond eight hours.

Sir, about the enhancement of facilities, I agree with the points that Mr. Bagrodia has made here. I would like to particularly speak about Kolkata. A second airport has become very much necessary for Kolkata and an airport in the North Bengal, At Coochbehar. In Coochbehar only trial services had been operated but not regular services. Regular services must be instituted there as soon as possible. There are some other important cities such as Burdwan, Malda etc. The time has come to see to it that facilities are enhanced in that area.

Sir, I would like to make one more point here. I would request the hon. Minister and the CMD, Air India, to introduce direct flights between Agartala and Delhi. I congratulate the hon. Minister for introducing a direct flight from Delhi to Agartala but there is no direct flight back from Agartala to Delhi. On the other hand, the Indigo company is operating a direct flight from Agartala to Delhi. But Air India is not operating. It is operating from Delhi to Agartala only. In the name of two flights, you are giving one aircraft. It should be one flight, either it should be 401 or 243. Though the aircraft is same, the flight has not become one. There is no flight of Air India from Agartala to Delhi. Indigo is covering four days. I request the hon. Minister to give flights for at least remaining three days from Agartala to Delhi directly. There are more important cities like Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai. however, Agartala people necessarily require this. There is no direct flight of Air India or Indian Airlines from Agartala to these cities. I am sure the hon. Minister will try to clear out my concerns. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, there are a lot of changes in Civil Aviation sector. No doubt that there is a need to change the legislation on par with international laws. Sir, various issues like over-crowding at airports and sky, requisite infrastructure, safety issues, flight regulation, social responsibility of airlines, public and private sectors, clearly demarcate the various authorities handling Civil Aviation Sector. But they are not properly taken care of in this Bill. There is one glaring ambiguity in this Bill. The functions like regulation of air transport services, civil traffic control, maintenance and operations of aerodrome are performed by the Airport Authority of India as per the Airport Authority Act, 1994. Now, as per the Bill, all these functions are vested with DGCA. How can the present Bill overcome

the Parliament Act of 1994? That is one ambiguity in this Bill. Other clauses are all right. Sir, it appeared in the Press that there were 18 air misses since January 2007 at Delhi and Mumbai airports. These airports were handed over to joint ventures since November 2006. These are on joint venture basis to private parties. Some works were also taken up by the Airport Authority of India after handing over. After that, there is no development in these two airports. Only some tinkering works are going on. But the incomes of these airports in 2006-07 have gone up to Rs. 740 crores. And, this year, it is expected to touch Rs. 900 crores. Even though, the income is going up, both the authorities are not developing the airports. You might have travelled from Delhi to Cochin so many times and seen the development that has been there. Every time they speak about air congestion or airport congestion. These are some of the things, which I wanted to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister.

Even after handing over of these airports to the private people, and, even when their income has gone up, there is no development at all. I would like to request the hon. Minister to look into this matter. With these words, I support the Bill. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Thank you for being specific and short. That is the best way. Now, Shri Sanjay Raut.

SHRI SANJAY RAUT (Maharashtra): Sir, I will not take much time of the House because my colleagues Shri Ajay Maroo and Shri Bagrodiaji have already made important points during their speeches. But I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister some facts. Sir, I have read the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the proposed Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2006. While the objective seems to be laudable on paper, in reality, the Bill provides for more concentration of power with the Director General of Civil Aviation. Sir, the present working conditions of the Office of Director General of Civil Aviation are shocking. The Office of the Director General of Civil Aviation is under-staffed; appropriate posts are not filled up; computerisation is zero, and, end-users including the national carriers, Air India and India Airlines, now owned by the National Aviation Company of India Limited are left to the mercy of highhanded officials of DGCA.

Sir, if you visit the office of DGCA, it is like a fish-market. I will not blame that there is corruption or inefficiency but there is some problem that you have to rectify or clear. Sir, I have seen many times that papers are filed in a primitive method and there is no security whatsoever.

Sir, now I come to another point. I will not name any private airline or anybody. But, Sir, private airlines have access to all secrets and important documents of the office of DGCA. It is my observation, which is shocking. They also obtain waivers of safety standards and have scant regards for the rules and regulations, which is very serious. In the context when the existing set-up of the DGCA is weak, under-staffed, not having appropriate qualified technical manpower, the proposed amendments giving further powers to the Director General of Civil Aviation will not serve the purpose. It will rather make matters worse. I sincerely request the House to consider hiring of expert consultancy services, such as Tata Consultancy Services for streamlining the air-traffic management in the country, except for safety and security functions; the Government should actively consider setting up of a separate regulatory body on the lines of TRAI to make the Office of DGCA more efficient and functional in the interests of the end-users. With these few words, I conclude. Thank you.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Thank you very much, Now, Shri V. Narayanasamy.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Thank you very much, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, for giving me the opportunity. I rise to support the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2007 moved by the hon. Civil Aviation Minister. While discussing about the amendment, though the amendments are very important, these are required because of the changes that are taking place in the civil

aviation sector. The kind of aircraft that coming from abroad and pilots who are coming here from abroad and operating aircraft, safety measures have to be maintained. And, if there is any violation, strict punishment should be there. Apart from that, the authorities have to get more powers to enforce the rules and regulations. Therefore, Sir, the hon. Minister brought forward this Bill. But, civil aviation sector is a very large sector now-a-days. We find that it is one of the industries that is growing by leaps and bounds in our country. A lot of private players have come here, but the infrastructure that is available is insufficient. The passengers feel very inconvenient with the kind of infrastructure that is available in the airports. The staff is overloaded with work. The merger of the Air India and the Indian Airlines as Air India Ltd. is a good concept. We welcome it and we support the hon. Minister for merging both the airlines, though there was some opposition initially from one quarter. By bringing it under one umbrella, the hon. Minister wanted to improve the efficiency of national and international airline sector. Number one, I am very much doubtful about the passenger safety. Day in and day out, whether it is Bombay or Delhi, the kind of reports are appearing the media that there is a narrow escape of two aircraft in the sky. Sometimes the aircraft are moving away from the runway. Passengers were safe. Thirdly, the aircraft are grounded without prior intimation. These are the daily occurrences. In Bombay, the passengers, who were going abroad, were stranded. These are the areas of concern which I want the hon. Minister to consider and make improvements. We go 95 per cent by the Air India. I do not know whether the hon. Minister goes by the Air India or not.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I go by all ailines.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: But, I go 95 per cent by the Air India. Now, Indian Airlines has become Air India. Don't think that it goes abroad only. It goes in India also.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Mostly you go abroad also.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: I go by that aircraft. But the kind of treatment meted out to the passengers, whether they are J-class or Y-class, things have to improve. I am not going into the courtsey part of it. It is there. But, the kind of facilities that are provided to the passengers has to improve. There is a possibility of improvement. The private aircraft are giving better facilities for the passengers. Why can't it be improved in the Air India? The hon. Minister is a very capable Minister who can take quick decisions. I requested the hon. Minister that when the passengers are not getting flights immediately and they have to wait for half-an-hour or forty-five minutes, to keep chairs for the passengers to have massage. It was immediately ordered and two chairs have been put in Chennai Airport. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Why is this favour for Chennai only?

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: I told the hon. Minister to put it in other places also. They are charging only Rs. 30 or Rs. 40. But, the passengers who were standing there or sitting there idle can rejuvenate their body. They have to pay a very small amount. This has been done. He is doing small things, but he has to do big things also. Sir, there I want the hon. Minister to concentrate. After five years, the civil aviation sector is going to be double its size. The number of aircraft is going to be doubled. Look at the airports also. I am very glad that the hon. Minister is concentrating on smaller airports also. He is trying to improve them. Smaller airports are going to have ATR and other aircraft. It is good.

Areas where there is potential for tourism have to be connected with air travel. The standard of living of people is increasing. People are spending money to travel by air. Therefore, you have to live with the pace of the situation. This I want to tell the hon. Minister. When you compare the difference of money between air and train fare, it is not more than 15 per cent.

therefore, people prefer air travel. When we board Boeing, which is 30 years old, before landing we have to pray to God whether we are going to land or not. That is the situation. Kindly ground those aircraft for heaven's sake. Don't threaten the passengers like this. Passengers have to live for some more time. I have faced this kind of situation. We cannot blame the staff. They have been overused. They have outlived their utility.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): At least they make you pray.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, I am very glad that the idea of the hon. Minister has brought a lot of foreign investments. It was 74 per cent FDI which was opposed by hon. Members from the Left parties. Then they fell in line with us. Initially, they opposed airports modernisation. Today, they are enjoying more flights than all of us. First, they oppose it, and when we do it, they enjoy it.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: What cannot be cured must be endured.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, we are all experiencing air traffic congestion. The flights hover for 45 minutes to one hour in the sky. What is the amount of wastage of fuel? These are the areas we have to look into. It is more in Delhi and Mumbai. Why cannot we have more runways? They say they are developing them. By 2008, they will be ready. Then you would have started it in 2006. You go to Singapore or Dubai or London. I am telling you about Singapore and Dubai. Every two minutes one aircraft lands there. They are able to cope with the passenger traffic.

Now you say that from November to February, there will be fog and flights will be late. You have put CAT III system in Mumbai, Chennai, and Delhi airports. But it is not operational. Our pilots say that they will not fly because they do not have experience. The hon. Minister has to consider all these things. When we find flights are going late, we have also to see the agony through which the passengers go. There are so many areas which we can highlight one by one. But above all, I would like to submit that the hon. Minister is doing whatever is possible from his side. But a lot more has to be done. That I would like to submit to him.

On pilot training, I am very happy about it. I am not having any complaint about it. But on our Puducherry Airport expansion, everything has been done. Your officers came and inspected the area. We would like to have a 50-passenger ATR to fly there. For expansion of runway, we requested the hon. Minister. He was kind enough to do it. But still it has not been done. Today also I reminded him. Chennai Airport's expansion is also pending. The Tamil Nadu Government has cooperated with them. Land has been identified and given to you. Defence land is there, you can take it. You can talk to the Government of India on this. Therefore, Sir, there are lot of areas where the hon. Minister has to do a lot of things. Now, that the aircraft have started coming one by one, I am very glad that for acquisition of aircraft, the Government of India is investing up to Rs. 10,000 crore for Air India. We are glad about it. But, Sir, I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that we should not allow the private carriers to grow at the cost of Air India. I want to make it very clear. We want that preference and priority should be given to the public sector. It should not be that at the cost of the public sector, the private should be allowed to grow. Therefore, I want the hon. Minister to fly by Air India only and not by other airlines because he should set an example for all of us. Sir, the hon. Members of Parliament want the public sector to improve; we want the public sector to grow. The hon. Minister for Public Sector Enterprises is also sitting here. We want to make profits in the public sector undertakings. The hon. Member, Shri Bagrodiaji, mentioned about the losses that are taking place now. Earlier, it was making profit. Now, after the merger, the situation should improve. Therefore, Sir, there are various areas like facilities for passengers, convenience of passengers,

safety of passengers, etc. are more important than anything else. There should be no compromise on that. Apart from that, I want the hon. Minister to see that the Air India Limited, a public sector undertaking, should be given all the importance by the Government. And, it should not be at the cost of the public sector, the private sector carriers should grow. With these words, I support the Bill. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Thank you Mr. Narayanasamy. Now, Mr. Minister.

Sir, I am very thankful to all the hon. Members for having participated with so much passion as well as understanding as to what is happening in civil aviation in the country. As all of you have acknowledged, and I am sure the whole world acknowledges, India's aviation is on the very high growth path and growth leads to its own share of problems also associated with growth. But that does not mean that growth should come with, I would say, pain to the travelling public and also, in a way, cause of concern as far as safety and security of the passengers, both on the ground and in the air, is concerned.

Before I start giving replies to the issues regarding the Bill, I would say, as a matter of concern, which has been raised across the board by every Member who spoke about safety, let me make it very categorical that aviation can only be either 100 per cent safe or not at all safe. There is nothing like 99.9 per cent safety in aviation. Therefore, whatever we do, whatever rules, regulations or guidelines which are issued by the regulatory framework—in this case, the Director—General of Civil Aviation—have to conform to safety standards which are 100 per cent. So, that is an underlying principle on the basis of which all guidelines, rules and regulations are being made. We talk about near—misses. This is something which is occurring in the newspapers everyday that there are near-misses at airports, planes are landing and some other plane is on the runway or there are some cases of mid—air collision when two aircraft could have come so close to each other. I read in some newspaper report today that the planes were so close—three miles apart—that within a fraction of a second, something could have happened. All these things, yes, certainly are a reason of concern to the passengers and also to the hon. Members who have raised here. After all, you are voicing the concerns, not only for yourself, but what you hear and what you are told by others also. So, with that view—point, I would like to make one thing very clear. It is a little bit of information. Every aircraft which flies the Indian skies and registered in India, is fitted with an instrument called TCAS. Now, this instrument has been made mandatory for all aircrafts. This was after the clash where two planes collided mid air in Delhi. That was a few years ago, and then, there has been a mandatory usage of the TCAS instrument. TCAS means that every aircraft flying knows exactly what is the traffic around it, and it can be visualised for a good 50 miles, or, may be, 100 miles. I am not a technical person, but I am aware that it gives you an indication of every aircraft flying in and around that aircraft, at what altitude it is flying, the direction in which it is flying. And even after that, assuming that the air traffic control does make some kind of a mistake in judgment as to giving flight path or flight level, both the aircrafts would get a simultaneous computer-generated warning that they are likely to be on a collision path. This would happen a good minute or so in advance so that enough time is there for both the pilots to take corrective action or even to contact ATC that they are probably flying on a path which is too close to each other. Assuming even that kind of a warning does not work, there is another computer-generated direction to the pilot of both the aircrafts to do what would be necessary for the safety of both these aircrafts so that they do not collide or they do not come into each other's path. So, there are enough safeguards which are provided technically now on every aircraft that files the Indian skies. When the air-miss is actually reported, it means it is more like an air proximity incident. This terminology of air-miss was there in the past, but now, the DGCA has also re-

classified it as air proximity. Now, the air proximity means that there is a breach of standard separation procedure. But that does not mean that it is going to lead to an incident of a mid air or a collision of two aircrafts. I was saying this because all of us here, including myself, need to be re-assured that we are flying safely in the skies. When you talk of an aircraft on the ground and an aircraft coming to land is suddenly asked to move and go back and turn around, as they say, it is only I would say a matter of procedure. Aircrafts are always in a line of mode, one after another, to land at any airport. Obviously, one aircraft is taking off and another is coming to land. But in the event of the aircraft earlier not havng vacated the runway at 500 feet before touch down, the ATC will give its final clearance to the aircraft whether they should land or not. I am amused sometimes when a report comes in the newspapers that a landing aircrafts pilots plane are on the runway, and therefore, decided to go around. That does not happen. It is not because the pilot is in the air, and so, the aircraft on the ground. The pilot would not be able to see the aircraft on the ground. It is the ATC which can find it out. We have a surface movement radar. We also have communication of the ATC with the pilot, both of the departing aircraft as well as the landing aircraft. So, therefore, to say that only the pilot alertness saved a situation is, I am sorry to say, not correct. There is a little bit of misreporting or the reporting in the media, I am sorry, the people who are reporting, are not paying enough attention to details or to find out what are the standard procedures. But let me assure you that all the procedures of safety and security, what we rear and commonly use in the newspapers or in media about air-misses and collisions, and whatever mishap has been averted, these are procedures well in place. This, I would just like to place on the record of the House, as a matter of information that this is applicable to every aircraft that files the Indian skies. Another issue about safety which was mentioned was about foreign pilots. Foreign pilots flying in India, within India, is one thing. But every international airline which files into India, has foreign pilots. So, to say that foreign pilots cannot fly within India, would actually be a little bit of a mis-communication. But, at the same time, pilots who fly within India or contracted by an Indian carrier to fly within India, each pilot has to go through an english proficiency test. So, besides going through the DGCA's ritual of giving an exam, which is a technical side in the interest of language and communication so that our ATC communication or pilot to pilot communication is understood, we have an English proficiency test conducted by the DGCA. So, there is no reason why anyone of us should believe that a foreign pilot flying in India will have a problem of communication with the ground or with another aircraft. So, this is another piece of information which I thought, I should be sharing with the House. Coming, basically, to, the issues relating to the Bill, the amendment which we are seeking, we are all aware that there is a high growth in the sector. And, also, this Act itself is an Act passed in 1934, of course, amended from time to time, but, our civil aviation sector has seen a very, very rapid increase in the last decade or so, and particularly in the last three years or so. In fact, the domestic aviation in this year is growing by 37 per cent. The previous year also, it was around the same number. The year before that also, it was in the high thirties. So, we can imagine that the kind of growth will, naturally, lead to some kind of issues and our regulatory framework needs to be strengthened. We have an international body, known as the International Civil aviation Organisation, which actually, regulates the entire civil aviation sector all over the world, in all the member-States. and, of course, India is an important member-State in the ICAO. Therefore, there has to be some regulatory framework. I just give you an example. All airports, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, in the past were owned by the Government. Originally, there was nothing like an Airports Authorty also. In the good old days, the DGCA owned all the airports. Then, we formed the National Aviation authority and the International Airports authrity. And, then, we merged the two and made it the Airport Authority. They still function. And one stake was that the Government owned the airports, ran the airports and regulate the airports. There was nothing like licensing. We now have private airports. Mumbai

and Delhi are in joint venture. Hyderabad and Bangalore are going to have Greenfield airports, and many new airports in the future years will be coming up across the country. Members have just pointed out that we need more than one airport in big cities. Members have said that we need connectivity to smaller towns; new airorts must come up. All the will, in future, envisage a role beyond the scope of the Government. The Government or the Airports Authority cannot keep on expandng or building every concievable airport in the country. As you rightly pointed out, Mr. Maroo, only 20 airports in the country make profits. For the rest of the airports the Government's laudable initiative is to bring up this infrastructure and support it, and cross-subsidise it with the profit making ones. Therefore, when new airports will come up, how do we regulate them? How do we regularise them? This provision was not available in the Airports Authority Act and the Aircraft Act. You mentioned, Mr. Sarkar, that there is a conflict. I don't see that there is a conflict. Each has a defined role. The Airports Authority Act is governing the role of the Airports Authority. And as far as the Aircraft Act is concerned, it is monitoring the whole sector. Earlier, there was no overlap because the Government was to do all the roles. Now, beyond the scope of the Government, we are govering the airports. Now, private airlines have come up. Earlier, there used to be only the Government airlines. There are a lot of issues, where beyond the scope of the Government, there has to be strengthening of the entire regulatory framework.

I would also like to say that there are certain other issues. Under section 12 of the airports authority Act, which you mentioned, there is no provision for licensing either of airport or air traffic control. Today, we talk of air traffic controllers. They are as important as pilots. They are as important as any other technical wing of the entire aviation sector. Ultimately, they are the ones who will monitor the high-tech equipment. We are moving on the satellite based navigation system which you yourself reffered to. India will, probably, be the fourth country in the world by 2008, probably, when our satellite is launched to move to satellite based GPS navigation system.

That will enable us to handle more traffic safely and it will also be more effective. In bigger cities where you have congestion and all these issues, this high-tech navigational equipment will be very useful. For that, we need good people. Manpower is required. Therefore, we don't have right now the provisioning of licensing of these Air Traffic Controllers. That is what is required. So, today, if you say that the Airports Authority will perform the job of the air traffic control and not the licence, who will regulate and who will see that they meet the desired standards of safety and security? These are some of the issues which are sought to be addressed in this amendment.

You have mentioend about "any other officer" and as the scope of the Act has been widened, it should be defined. But, today, the regulator, the DGCA, is not all encompassing. Earlier it was all encompassing. Today, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security is completely a different area which was earlier conducted only by the DGCA. The BCAS is also like "any other officer". There are much wider functions which will be defined in future. We can't keep on coming, again and again, to amend the Act for every small change. Therefore, we are seeking amendments. It does not mean that " any other officer" means just anybody is going to be assigned the functions of monitoring safety and security. That, I can assure you, will not be so easy to tamper with. But, at the same time, the scope has to be widened because, as you have mentioned, security was never a function which was envisaged earlier when the Aircraft Act was passed in 1934. Of course, it was amended subsequently, from time to time. Besides this, many issues have been raised by hon. Members. But I can only say one thing, as far as this Act *per se* is concerned.

I was mentioning, in my opening remarks, about bird hits. Today, bird hits have again become a feature which occur, from time to time, again causing concern for the safety and security of the aircraft and passengers. Now, we can't regulate anything outside the boundary of the airport; whereas the bird hits are occurring mainly because of garbage and other waste matter being dumped,-ponds and water being accumulated outside the airports, etc. These are actually the functions of the civic authority or any other authoirty outside the scope of the airport. Within the scope of this Act we don't have any powers where we can bring in penal provision, where we can regulate all these things. Ultimately, an airport and the passengers are safe only, if the periphery around it is equally secured. That is also one of the enabling provisions where we are able to bring in some of these activities, at least, within the scope of the regulator to regulate and try to monitor, and to see if some changes can be made in that regard.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: What are you going to do to avoid the delay caused by fog?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I was just dealing with the Act part of it. However, as regards the issue of fog and other issues, I can tell you, as much as I have mentioned you about safety and security, which is about certain system, fog management must be understood. You deel that it is only in India that flights get delayed due to fog. The answer is "No". In all major airports across the world when there is very heavy fog or dense fog, when there is snowfall or bad weather, including very heavy rains—I am not talking about small airports; I am talking about airports like London, Frankfurt; New York, Chicago, etc—there are delays. All these airports go through delays and all these airports get flights diverted or cancelled, and airports are closed down for some days or hours or whatever the case may be.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: It is snowfall, Sir.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: No, Mr. Narayanasamy, Please.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Don't compare their climate with our climate.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Anyway, you are entitled to have your views. But I can tell you, for us, the safety and security of the passengers is of utmost importance. Fog-related delays do take place. The objective is to minimise them. The objective is to operate during such conditions of fog or bad weather in a safe and secured manner. CAT-IIIB equipment has been installed at the Delhi airport and has been made functional. But you need to have pilots to be trained in an equal measure. It is ultimately the human skill which is required. the number of pilots has increased. We have approximately 800 pilots trained under CAT 3B across all the airlines of the country, last year. We have encouraged airlines. We have pressurised airlines to have more and more training. This year, I am told, there are approximately 1600 pilots who were trained in CAT 3B conditions. this number will keep on growing. But the fact is, you cannot have overnight transition of all the pilots to a CAT 3B situation. Ultimately, if they go without the requisite training, I am sure, whether I like to say it or not or whatever is the sense of the House, the regulator will be governed by his own considerations of safety and security and vigorous training and without that there will not be license for a pilot to operate under CAT 3B conditions. But having said so, the equipment is in place and more and more pilots are being trained and airlines are taking an initiative. I am happy that over a period of time, this situation will also improve. But remember one thing. Sometimes, you may feel that the flight is not operating out of Delhi Airport during fog, but that flight may be bound for Lucknow, which is fog bound where there is no CAT 3B or that flight may be bound for Srinagar or Jammu or Jaipur or Amritsar or Chandigarh where again there may be fog. Entire North India is in fog for some days in a

year. If those airports are closed, you may think that there is a problem at the Delhi Airport and, therefore, the flights are not going. May be, the flight can go from here but it has no place to land. That can also be one of the reasons. Fog management has to be done and understood, rather than just being critical about it. Ultimately, we are concerned about safety and security. 'Better be late than never.' Let us put it is that way. But, anyway, I appreciate his activeness for the welfare of the passengers. I will certainly ask the airlines to be more and more particular in this matter.

So far as old aircraft, as mentioned by some hon. Members, are concerned, let me tell you an aircraft is not safe, whether it is old or new. The aircraft is safe as long as it is maintained. There are certain rigid, stringent benchmarks and certain regulations which every airline has to follow. If an aircraft is 30 years old, it does not mean that it is not safe. But I appreciate the point. An older aircraft leads to more maintenance problems, therefore, is prone to more delays and sometimes schedules are not maintained. The erstwhile Indian airlines, which is now air India, used to have old planes, which nobody bought for so many years. These planes were bought during Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi's regime. Only in this Government, we have been able to place orders for 111 aircraft for Air India. These aircrafts are now being inducted into the fleet. It will take two to three years before all the aircrafts are inducted into the fleet. That does not mean that any older aircraft is unsafe. But I would like to say that I was pained to read some news items appearing in newspapers literally accusing our national carrier. Well I do appreciate; there could be some area of improvement which should be done. There is nobody who is supporting any kind of inefficiency. But don't we all appreciate that Air India has to perform functions much beyond the scope of any other private airline? If there is a Haj operation, Air India has to support it. If there is a VVIP movement, Air India has to support it. If there is any national exigency, Air India has to support it. We have to do whatever it takes as a national carrier. Therefore, at times, Air India, at the cost of even taking beatings at the hands of consumers, does not forget its national obligation. We need to understand it. If they have not been able to get planes for 20 years, if they have to, with an older fleet, compete with new airlines with newer and younger fleet, I don't think they have any reason to be blamed. It is the Government of the day, successive Governments which did not buy planes for them. Should Air India be faulted because some Government or the other in the past did not give it adequate support to be able to compete with the private sector? That has to be understood. That is why, if we, on the one hand have not been able to do our duty in supporting the airline, we should not be overly critical. I do appreciate where there is an area of improvement, it should be carried out. At the same time, they have been growing with their hands tied. They should also be supported, at least by the Members of Parliament, if not by outsiders...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK (Goa): Can you do something about our airhostesses?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: In this very House, there was an issue when I had to keep quiet. There was a lot of uproar. So, let us not talk about airhostesses. At the same time, I would like to say that there are scopes of improvement. I have no hesitation in accepting that Air India needs a lot of improvement. And there is a scope for improvement. In fact, the merger has been done because in the face of competition, unless and until they become a strong, formidable Airline, with only one airline operating internationally and only one operating within the domestic area, all other private carriers, eventually like other carriers, progressively will be flying both domestic and international areas. We needed synergy and needed to optimise from the operation, which would also result in cost saving and better product to the passenger. Having said that, there are lots of other areas. In fact, we all talked about infrastructure. It is a very critical area. Infrastructure has to be improved, and it has to be improved in a time-bound manner. We do know about the congestion at Mumbai and Delhi. Of course, I always

say, Mumbai and Delhi are not what India is. But they are our prime cities, major cities, Delhi being the capital city. They need to be given the infrastructure which is due to them. And, to that end, the Delhi airport, at least, will see the second runway in operational, somewhere in the month of May-June, 2008. Once that second runway becomes operationk it will be a genuine paralled runway, unlike the two runways, which we have today, are not parallel runways. Once the parallel runways come into place, Delhi's infrastructure and the congestion problem in Delhi will have eased considerably. At the same time, Mumbai will need a second airport at the earliest. The Union Cabinet has already accorded, in principle, its approval for a second airport in Mumbai. The Maharashtra Government is actively being pursued to see to it that the second airport comes up at the earliest, hopefully by 2011-12, at least the first phase of it. Otherwise, the new airports in Hyderabad and Bangalore will be ready in March, 2008. We have already sanctioned a major amount of almost close to Rs. 2,000 crores for the upgradation of Kolkata airport and close to Rs. 600 crores for the upgradation of Chennai airport. I am sorry; when we talk about land, land at Chennai has not yet been received by the Government. Intent is one thing; but the actual handling over the land is needed. I also appeal to all the hon. Members to pursue it with their State Governments. Many airports, across the country, can be upgraded to a much better standard. But each State Government has to be a little more over-active and try to give us some additional requirements of land. Airports are 20—50 years old. Today the needs have changed, and infrastructure has not grown with that kind of change of need. Therefore, we need the States also to support us in giving us the support in building up the infrastructure at the earliest.

As for multiple airports, we are on the works; we are processing, we will bring a new policy to bring in new greenfield airports across the country. To that end, I don't have the policy right today. But the Government is seized of the matter. We do understand that the real growth is coming in the tier-2 and tier-3 cities. Today every small city, every district headquarter is vying for airconnectivity. We have to provide that. The States have got small airports. They need to be activated. They need to be brought into the aviation map of our country. I am indeed happy to state that in 2004, when we took over, there were 50 operational airports across india. Today we are operating in 81 cities in India, and by the year, 2008, there is an ambitious plan to connect, at least,. 100 cities of India. So, the number of towns and cities, being connected, is also progressively increasing. Smaller towns and smaller airports are being brought into the aviation map. The States have also to come forward, and I am happy that with growth in the sector and the active participation of a lot of Members of Parliament of both the Houses, many State Governments have now come forward to build new infrastructure or give away their existing infrastructure on a joint venture basis for development. This will help the growth of aviation in the years to come. As I had mentioned earlier, aviation's hight growth also bring its share of problems. As we see, infrastructure constraints are there in anything. You go to roads, the roads are chock-a-block; you go to ports, ports are chock-a-block. Aviation infrastructure also has not been upgraded today's level of requirement. But I can assure you that the Government is very much aware of the aviation infrastructure, and when I talk of infrastructure, I just don't mean runways and terminals, I also mean intrastructure in the air—commnications infrastructure, navigation infrastructure, air traffic control infrastructure, all this, to make it effective, safe and secure. Ultimately, the test of the growth of aviation will lie in managing this growth safely and securely, not just managing it by building a terminal here or runway there.

Then, aviation safety is not restricted to technicaly safety. Today terrorism poses its own challenges. Airports are prime targets. They will have to be made safe. For that also a lot of investment has to be done in the years to come. Special systems will have to be developed to

make airports safe and flying safe. Therefore, the objective and the spirit of this Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2007 is to ensure that the changes are consonant with what is happening in the world. We know, as Mr. Maroo has rightly mentioned, America has 8000 aircraft in its skies, Europe has at least 5000 aircraft in its skies, China has about 1,10,000 and India has now close to 400 aircrafts, which will grow by leaps and bounds to almost a thousand aircraft in the next ten years. Therefore, we need to have a better regulatory framework; we need to have a better legislative framework to manage the high growth. Therefore, I thank the hon. Member for having taken active participation and for having given valuable inputs for making flying a much safer and a better experience.

With these words, I would like to place my appreciation on record and request the Members of the House to give their consent.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): The question:

"That the Bill further to amend to Aircraft Act, 1934, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2 to 14 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill be passed."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (P. J. KURIEN): Now, the clarifications.

SHRI SURENDRA LATH (Orissa): Sir, It is already 6.00 P.M. it will take a minimum of two hours. There are seven or eight speakers and this is a very important matter.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, there are Members who want to seek clarifications.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): What is the sense of the House?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): Sir, I don't have any objection to whatever the House decides.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN):The hon. Minister syas he has no objection to taking it up today or on some other day. I shall go by the sense of House.

DR. V. MAITREYAN: Tomorrow, Sir.

SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDRAM (Tamil Nadu): Tommorrow, Sir.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: We should take it up today, Sir.

SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Sir, it will take time; this is very important issue.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): Do you want to take it up today or tomorrow?

SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Tomorrow, Sir.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, we will take it up tomorrow.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN: (PROF. P. J. KURIEN): All right. The House is adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 A.M.

The House then adjourned at five minutes past six of the clock till eleven of the clock on Wednesday, the 28th November, 2007.

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